Sheffield Occupational Health Service
A healthy workplace for a healthy workforce

Information for patients
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals
Sheffield Occupational Health Service

Sheffield Occupational Health Service is staffed by doctors and nurses trained in occupational health and operates as an independent unit giving impartial advice to management and employees about the effects of work on health and health on work.

We liaise closely with all departments, especially infection control, health and safety and human resources.

We provide impartial advice to employees, management and their representatives.

We advise on appropriate job placement, assess health hazards, undertake screening and provide health surveillance within the workplace.

Good businesses manage their resources effectively and realise that their most important resource is their staff. It is no coincidence that the best of British businesses employ Occupational Health Services to protect and maintain the health of their employees.

We promote the physical and mental wellbeing of employees by providing a quality occupational health service to the needs of the organisation, enabling the employer to fulfil business aims and meet legislative responsibilities.
Occupational health is about keeping you free from ill health associated with conditions at work

**Employers** have a legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees so far as is "reasonably practicable".

**Employees** have a legal duty to care for their own health and safety and that of others.

A safe and healthy workplace is achieved by a process of risk management which:

- Identifies hazards
- Determines risks
- Plans how to eliminate or reduce risks and hazards
- Takes steps to eliminate or reduce risks and hazards
- Deals with residual risk
- Monitors and reviews risk

**Hazards at work may include:**

**Hazardous substances and biological agents such as bacteria, viruses and chemicals**

- Exposure can result from inhalation, swallowing, splashing into the eyes, absorption through the skin or from accidental injection.
- The effects can include poisoning, burns, eye injuries, skin disorders, cancer, asthma and other lung diseases, blood borne diseases.

**Radiation**

- Exposure to x-rays, lasers and non-domestic microwaves can result in burns, skin disorders, eye injuries, cancer and other illnesses.
Repetitive movements

- Hazards include repeated movements, poor posture, excess force, lack of rest periods and poor equipment design.
- Effects include strains, sprains and other upper limb disorders or repetitive strain injuries.

Manual handling

- Lifting heavy loads or improper lifting can cause neck and back injuries.

To protect yourself from hazards at work, you must:

- Use safe working practices
- Use equipment provided
- Comply with health surveillance where appropriate

Occupational health focuses on prevention

To help promote a healthy workforce we offer:

- Pre-employment health screening
- Health assessment after illness or injury
- Immunisation programmes
- Health promotion
- General health advice
- Workstation assessment
- Workplace visit
- Health surveillance programmes
- Needs assessment
To help attain a healthy workplace our service will offer advice on:

- Safe working practice
- Accident prevention
- Infection control issues
- Pregnancy at work

**Helping people with health problems at work**

In addition to preventing work-related ill health, our role is to assist employees with health problems which affect their work by:

- Giving simple health advice on worries and concerns
- Advising on workplace modification, redeployment or alternative work if appropriate, including planning return to work after sickness absence.

**Confidentiality and record keeping in the Occupational Health Service**

The records stored within the occupational health department are completely separate from the patient record system. When there is no one in the department, the records are securely locked away. The information is kept both on paper and on computer database. This database is not linked to any other system within or outside the hospital and complies with the Data Protection Act.

No-one inside or outside the Trust, other than yourself and occupational health staff, can see these records without your written consent.

Where a manager identifies a problem relating to an employee’s health at work, a referral to the Service can be made.
Advice will be given to the manager and the employee, but medical details will remain confidential.

Staff can refer themselves in confidence to a specialist nurse practitioner.

Sheffield Occupational Health Service is dedicated to providing comprehensive health programmes to both the NHS and other employers in South Yorkshire.

For information on any of our services please contact us at:

Sheffield Occupational Health Service

- 0114 271 4737

Opening hours are:

- 8.30am - 4.30pm, Monday - Friday

Sheffield Occupational Health Service does not provide G.P. services, so we recommend that you are registered with a local practice.